# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
# LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1143
ANSWERED ON:07.03.2007
EXTENSION OF USO BROADBAND FACILITY
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**Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:**

(a) the criteria for extending Universal Service Obligation (USO) to the remote border areas of the country;

(b) whether remote border villages from Kashmir Valley fall in the category for extending Universal Service Obligation (USO);

(c) if so, the reasons for not extending Universal Service Obligation (USO) to these far flung areas of Kashmir Valley;

(d) whether the Government proposes to extend USO broadband internet facility in all border States, including Jammu and Kashmir and North East States; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

## Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) Following criteria is followed for extending Universal Service Obligation (USO) to the rural and remote areas including remote border areas of the country:

(i) Provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) by November, 2007 in all revenue villages in the country without any public telephone facility. This excludes village having population less than 100, lying in thick forest areas/naxalite infested areas etc.

(ii) Replacement of Multi-Access Radio Relay (MARR) VPTs.

(iii) Provision of Rural Community Phones (RCPs) in villages with population more than 2000 and where there are no Public Call Offices (PCO).

(iv) Provision of Rural Household Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) on demand in 1685 commercially unviable Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) of the country.

(v) Provision of mobile services including Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) services on Fixed/Mobile Terminals in the specified rural and remote areas of the country, where there is no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) USO is applicable in far flung areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

(d) & (e) With the aim to provide e-governance and data services to the rural masses, Government with the help of USO Fund is in the process of taking necessary action for facilitating broadband connectivity provisioning in rural and remote areas of the country including Jammu & Kashmir in phased manner by utilizing the infrastructure created for provision of mobile services.